364 351 certain rent-free lands. Moreover, every morning the womenfolk of each house sweep and clean that portion of the lane which lies directly in front of their own house, sprinkle it with water or water mixed with cow-dung and often decorate the entrance with designs drawn with millet or rice flour. Notwithstanding this, the lanes are not always very clean. The reasons for this are many. The Yetti Madigas do not sweep the village very regularly; and the women, when they have finished their housework, often throw the refuse [514] into the public thoroughfare. Thirdly, very few people have latrines in their houses, and even those who have them are inclined to make their children ease themselves at the side of the [231] road. However, the pigs kept by the Erkala caste as well as the large number of dogs in the village are good scavengers and help to keep the village clean.

4. THE HOUSES

342 351 The dwellings in Shamirpet can be classified into three main groups: the Bhawanti, the Penkutillu and the Gudse.

The Bhawanti. This is a large house with stone walls and tiled roofs; it generally stands in its own compound, which is surrounded by a wall, and invariably has five to six rooms. The following account of the house of I.R., a woman with considerable local influence and a good-sized agricultural holding, will illustrate this type of house. As we enter the gate in the compound wall we find ourselves in front of an open space which constitutes [372] the courtyard of the house. On one side of this courtyard there is a cattle-shed, the end of which is partitioned off as a store-room for fuel-cakes made of cow-dung. Opposite the gate across the courtyard is a verandah running the whole length of the house; at one end of this verandah there is a small room in which agricultural implements are kept. The main door of the house leads into an [515] inner court which is open to the sky. In the centre is a stone-lined sink, known as *gachhu*, which can be drained and cleaned, and here, sitting on small wooden stools, the women of the house bath. The inner court is surrounded on three sides by rooms; on one side there are two inter-connected rooms, the first being used as a dining-room and the second as a kitchen. Opposite this, running the whole length of the inner court, is a long room, while opposite to the main house door and across the inner court is a door which

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

leads into the room used for the storing of grain and various household goods. At the end is a small room, and here are lodged the gods and deities of the household.

Although small variations are sometimes seen in the internal arrangement of this type of dwelling, the principles of construction are generally everywhere the same. The walls are made of local stone, which is available at very cheap rates; the doors and their frames are fashioned by the local carpenter and are often decorated on the outside with carvings of geometrical designs and occasionally human or animal figures. The walls are plastered with mud and washed with coloured earth. Almost all the rooms have mud floors; the roofs are always tiled. The Bhawanti type of house is the house of the well-to-do cultivator as well as that of the more substantial people belonging to the occupational castes. Although the houses of the Muslims, both cultivators and traders, as well as of Hindus with urban contacts, conform to the general pattern of the Bhawanti, they show certain marks of sophistication which are obviously the result of urban influences. Such houses have whitewashed walls and stone floors, and many, especially those of the Muslims, have pit-latrines in the backyards. The outer walls are often decorated with motifs borrowed from the city.

The furniture in this type of house is very meagre. In some houses there are a few hard wooden chairs, crude benches and stools or perhaps folding chairs with canvas seats. A popular item of furniture is the wooden *takht*, a large, portable wooden platform, rectangular in shape and supported on four legs. It is about two feet high and seats four to eight people. The other common article of furniture met with in the village is the bedstead, on which the meagre bedding is spread. Rich people have a large framed bedstead which is often ornamented. It is known as *palang*. But poorer people use the small-framed *charpoy* or *khat* woven with locally made thin hemp ropes.

It has been pointed out earlier that the average rural house of this type is often embellished with carvings on the doors. Moreover the walls are generally decorated with designs or human or other animal figures. Cheap prints of Hindu gods and goddesses or family photographs taken by street photographers in the city decorate the walls in some of the houses. The more educated people and retired petty officials sometimes possess clocks, but

these are generally out of order and are used rather as decorations than to tell the time.

Household utensils are generally made by the local potter. But shining brassware, including a few large pots for storing water, are a mark of respectability. Food is served on brass, bell-metal or aluminium plates. Water is drunk from metal mugs or brass beakers. In some houses a couple of china cups and saucers and a few glass plates are also to be seen.

The Penkutillu. This type of house is smaller and less ostentatious, and is built by average cultivators with small holdings, who are neither rich nor poor according to village standards. These houses also have a courtyard and possibly a backyard; a verandah and two or three rooms which are used for various purposes. The walls are of stone, the floor of mud and the roof is tiled. The cattle-shed is generally close to the living-room and there is neither latrine nor bathroom in the house.

This type of house is also decorated with carvings on the doors, and designs are painted on the wall. In such houses furniture is regarded as a luxury; there may be a few bedsteads, some small wooden stools and possibly a crude chair or two. People with city contacts decorate the walls of their houses with commercial calendars or coloured magazine covers. The household utensils in this type of house are, except for metal plates used for serving food, of earthenware, even water being stored in clay pots. Yet respectability demands that such a house should have at least some brass utensils. These are greatly coveted by the ambitious housewife.

The Gudse. These are the commonest type of dwellings found in Telangana, and are indeed the most numerous in Shamirpet. The walls of these huts are either made of mud or they are made of wattle-screen and plastered with mud. The roof is always thatched. The hut is built in a small enclosure and has generally only one room, from which the kitchen is partly partitioned. These huts have very little furniture and all household utensils are the wares of the local potter. The few metal utensils which the family possesses are among the most treasured parts of the household property.

All the three types of village dwellings have some features in common. Almost all of them have some open space either at the front or at the back. This is generally enclosed. Here women bath and in times of emergency, such as illness or other incapacity, it may also be used as a latrine. During the rainy season

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

it is used for the growing of vegetables, specially fruit-bearing creepers, and throughout the year it is used by the household fowls. Similarly, in most of these houses the cattle-shed is very close to the main living-room. Hardly half a dozen houses in the village have latrines; the majority of the people go out into the fields or behind the rocks for answering the call of nature. Notwithstanding some variety, the decorative designs found on all the houses follow a generally established pattern. The floors are swept twice every day in almost all the houses. The mud floor is periodically smeared with cow-dung mixed with water and the walls are washed annually with lime or coloured earth. Grain and provisions are stored in large receptacles made either by the potter and well burnt to a vermilion red or by the Erkala in their traditional styles of basket-work.

All the houses in Shamirpet can be classed into one of these three types. The Gudse-type huts of the Erkalas are, however, a class by themselves. These small, circular huts, made from sheets of weed-matting, are about twenty feet in diameter and are often only six feet high. The interior is unpartitioned and serves as bedroom, dining-room, living-room and kitchen. Pigs and poultry are housed in similar but smaller round huts built in the immediate vicinity of the dwelling-hut.

From time to time groups of families belonging to the nomadic castes come to the village. These have their low, portable huts, which are mostly made of folding bamboo screens. Almost every month some group belonging to this category makes its appearance in Shamirpet and after a stay of a week or so moves off with its huts, dogs and pigs.

5. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SHAMIRPET

The nearness of Shamirpet to the cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad has been mentioned. People holding small government posts or having urban relations make periodic visits to the city. Others, especially young men, cycle down to Secundrabad or Hyderabad to visit the cinema or to look at the shops.

In the broad social sense, however, Shamirpet's more intimate ties are with the villages in the neighbourhood. In the events and developments of these villages the people of Shamirpet are very keenly interested. The hamlets of Babugura and Upparpalli are

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

or in kind. In the course of a long ceremony, two or three times they may get money, twice or thrice some grain or a few brass or bell-metal utensils, and ultimately a set of new clothes. Like the other castes, the barber and the washerman also work independently outside the system of these traditional arrangements.

OTHER CASTES

Before describing the system of family affiliation between the Madiga untouchables and the agriculturists, brief mention should be made of the other castes in the village.

There is only one family of Katike (Hindu butchers) in the village. In point of social status this family ranks equal to the Kapu group. The head of the family slaughters goats and sheep and sells meat to the villagers. The Muslims slaughter their goats and sheep separately or buy their requirement of beef from the market in the city. Shamirpet is largely a Hindu village, and partly out of regard for the sentiments of the majority community, and partly to avoid trouble, the Muslims do not slaughter cows in the village.

The solitary family of the Darzi (tailor) with an old sewing machine is obviously a new addition to the population of the village. Even by modest city standards the abilities of this tailor in his craft must be regarded as rather crude. Yet he has a fairly good business in the village. Except for the well-to-do people, and a few others who maintain regular contact with the city, all others either buy cheap ready-made clothes, or they get their tailoring done by this man in the village, who also attracts considerable custom from nearby villages.

The families of Vaddars (stone-workers) always have sufficient work, either in Shamirpet itself or in some of the neighbouring villages. Those who can afford a house of a superior type have it built of stone. Use of bricks is very rare in this part of the country and thus practically all substantial houses in the village are of stone. The rocky surroundings of the village provide an ample supply, and the Vaddars, adept in the traditional technique of breaking and shaping stone, turn it into a useful building material. Because of their crude technique the work of the Vaddars is very hard indeed and entails considerable physical exertion. Payment for this work is generally on the basis of piece wages. In the busy agricultural season the Vaddars accept other work also on extra wages,

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

They mostly hunt small game, and are adept in the use of traps, snares and dogs. At the time of these investigations there were six guns in the village; and occasionally their owners went out shooting. Similarly, fishing is done by very few people, mostly by some young Muslim men. They do not use fishing nets and traps, and practically the only method employed by them for catching the fish is that of using the rod, hook and bait. The large tank in the vicinity of the village could afford a good supply of fish, but the absence of the fishing caste in the village population leaves this possibility almost unexplored. Fishermen from the neighbouring villages, however, periodically come to the tank.

The surroundings of Shamirpet offer very few opportunities for the collection of wild food. Around the village there are not many fruit-bearing trees. Mango and *jamun* (rose apple, *Eugenia jambolana*) fruits are mostly eaten while they are still unripe by the village boys. Parties of children and young people periodically go to pick wild berries when they are in season. These are mostly eaten on the spot. When wild figs are ripe children collect and eat them. Another item of food eagerly sought by everyone is the *chikur*—tender tamarind leaves. These leaves are curried, as well as pickled and preserved. Honey is collected by some men of lower castes and inferior social status, whenever they can spot a comb. Medicinal herbs, roots, tubers and barks are collected according to need.

Utilization of forest resources is not open to everyone now. From the surrounding scrub jungle villagers can collect only a limited quantity of fuel, as this—as well as getting timber—is regulated by the Forest Department of the government, and permits can be obtained only by making scheduled payments.

Different kinds of coloured earth used in washing walls and decorating the interiors of homes, as well as the ordinary requirements for the construction of houses, can be freely collected by the people. The Vaddars can break and shape stones without having to pay for them.

6. NON-AGRICULTURAL OCCUPATIONS

In an effort to explain the broad outlines of the economic organization of the community, the traditional occupations and functions of the different castes have already been described. With reference to the inter-relations between the agriculturists

133 dicates deposition in shallow but not sheltered waters, and the general lie of the E coast may thus be of great antiquity. The change in strike between the Orissa Hills and the Cuddapahs is very closely followed by the coast.

B7 The hills are wooded and the pattern of relief stands out clearly on forest
132 and population maps (Figs. 18, 30); but the forest is thin, rainfall being
523 only about 40 ins. and the rocks porous or fissured. The few inhabitants are mostly Chenchus, an aboriginal tribe living a semi-pastoral existence eked out by the collection of honey, bamboos, fuel for the railways, and other minor forest produce.

311 The valleys, however, though on the whole poor enough, have a fair
312 amount of cultivation, mostly jowar (25–30% TSA), other millets, groundnut (16–20%), with some irrigated paddy. The topography in the longitudinal valleys favours the construction of large tanks by bunding a transverse
[496] tributary gorge. The main (GIP) Madras–Bombay railway strikes diagonally across the S of the region, and is one of the most interesting traverses
133 in India. The hill country is first entered in the Nagaris, which are the last
361 Cuddapah outliers; here Renigunta and Tirupati are little towns controlling at once the route up the Swarnamukhi, the crossings of the river, and
311 the col to the N between the Palkondas and Velikondas. Beyond, in the Razampeta corridor, the contrast between cultivated floor and barren hills is exceedingly sharp. The generally arid aspect is mitigated by groves of
● [342] mangoes around the tanks; houses are stone- or mud-walled, and round beehive huts, striped vertically in white and rusty red, attest the Telugu country. After crossing the wide bed of the Cheyyeru, the line emerges at Cuddapah from grey and arid hills into a greyer plain, a vast ash-coloured expanse largely given over to dry cultivation. The region lies on the margin of the October–December rainfall area of the Madras littoral, and the rivers rise in the dry Mysore Maidan, not in the Wn Ghats as do Kistna and Tungabhadra; hence, even in August, the great streams—Penner itself, Cheyyeru, Papagni, Chitravati—may be spreads of quartzite boulders, shingle, or sand, several hundred yards wide with a line of water a yard across, or even not a drop; while only 90 miles to the N the Ghats-fed rivers are full, great ribbons of muddy water half a mile or more wide.

312 Through the Kunderu valley runs the ill-starred Kurnool Canal, constructed in 1860–76 by a private company which apparently failed to notice the difference in the régimes of Peninsular and extra-Peninsular rivers; the complete, but inefficient, canal had eventually to be taken over by the government in 1882 after two decades of mismanagement. The topographical layout is obviously encouraging, and it is now proposed to recast the whole project, with reservoirs on the Kistna and at Someswaram in the lowest of the Penner watergaps; the project, if carried out in full, would irrigate no less than 3 m. ac., mostly, however, in the coastal plain of Nellore.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Telugu AWI7

242 The people think that these are all visitations of goddesses and [782] accordingly offer a sheep, or pig, or a white hen or cock as a sacrifice.

Cattle diseases—Kurama.—The ox or cow when it suffers from 232 this refuses food, shivers, suffers as from cold. *Domma*—Shivering, swelling of the stomach and purging. *Chalidomma*—Swelling starts at some portion of the body, extends to the neck and proves fatal. *Nalupu jadyam*—Purging and dying. *Gundasala*—The heart bursts in this. *Musara*—Ulceration all over and refusal of food.

Medicines are prepared out of omum, assafœtida, turmeric, pepper, onions and like articles and some medicinal herbs found in woods and forests.

Up till now no assistance has been given by the Agricultural department.

313 Fuel is obtained from the jungle near by. Wood for building and implements is obtained from the Avulapalle forest, a magnificent forest abounding in good game, belonging to the zamindari itself. The distance from here is about a dozen miles.

The village.—The depressed castes live in circular thatched huts. 342 Everything is dirty inside and out. The dwelling is circular consisting of but one room which serves for all purposes. Generally the diameter of the house is about 22 feet.

There are thirty houses in the caste village; three are terraced, none tiled, one earthen-roofed, all the rest thatched.

[437] The ryots occasionally exchange lands to get their lands continuous. Field huts are used only at harvest time.

463 *Subsidiary industries.*—There are no weavers at all now. Handspinning was once practised when cotton was raised locally, [276] but abandoned about thirty-five years ago, because cotton is no longer raised. 465

Crafts.	Working time.	Earnings.	Remarks.
Blacksmith ...	About 75 per cent.	Rs. 40 or Rs. 50 per annum.	He does not work every month. It is at harvest times that he gets manuls called *thripamu* and *mera*. These amount to about three or four puttles; 1 putti = 160 Madras measures [i.e., 400 lb.—Ed.]
Dommara ...	Almost always.	Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 per annum.	Makes wooden combs.
Potter	Do.	Rs. 70 or Rs. 80 per annum.	Not only sells to others, but also gets the same manuls as the blacksmith from the ryots at harvest time.

438 *Village trade.*—Wood required for agricultural and industrial purposes is purchased in the forests belonging to the zamindari above mentioned. Iron implements are purchased in Punganur, or Chouldepalli.

The nearest market is Kandur, a village 3 miles off.

Whatever is grown in the village and required for household purposes is retained by the villagers. The rest is all sold.

361 There is a local road which passes by this village running from 489 Somala to Kalikiri. This local road connects with the trunk road running from Punganur to Chandragiri. The nearest railway

3k: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Telugu AW17

Photo by K. Krishnamurti.

VILLAGE OF THETTUPALLI.

[facing p. 102]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Telugu AW17

231 Horses are fed on grass and gram chiefly, sometimes also on oats and bran.

237 *Manuring.*—Nearly 90 per cent of the cow-dung is used as manure, the rest being used for household purposes.

Almost all the cattle urine is allowed to run to waste except trifling quantities used for household purposes.

241 The green manure chiefly used is the leaf of the Kanaga tree. Generally all kinds of green leaf are held to be good manure. This is obtained chiefly from the surrounding jungle, licences being obtained on payment of a fee to the Maharaja's Government. Sometimes topes are planted for the purpose.

No other kinds of vegetable manure are largely used. In some cases, for instance in the cultivation of sugarcane, the refuse left after the oil has been squeezed out from the fruit of the Kanaga tree is used.

232 Insect-pests and cattle diseases and the method of combating them are the same as in Thettupalli.[1]

361 *The village.*—The village occupies an area of 9·36 acres. The tendency is for the members of one caste to congregate together. For example all the Muhammadans live in one part of the village together. The Komatis live exclusively in one street.

●342 The depressed classes live in dirty and squalid huts of but one room.

There are in the caste village 85 thatched houses, none tiled, 63 terraced; in the Paracheri, only thatched houses 31 in number. There are no gardens adjoining any of the dwellings. The fields lie adjoining and surrounding the village. The most distant field lies about three-quarters of a mile off.

There is a great demand for additional building sites.

435 If land is obtained direct from the Government a fee of ½ anna per square yard is charged, payable on sale. If dry land is acquired for the purpose from pattadars, the value ranges from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per acre. It is only near this village that the value is so low. Further up the value goes up to nearly Rs. 300 or Rs. 350.

463 *Subsidiary industries.*—There are only two pariahs who weave at all. They use two handlooms.

[281] No hand spinning is practised. Yarn is bought ready made. The other crafts are—

Crafts.	Average time.	Earnings per year.	Remarks.
Blacksmith.	The major part of the day.	About Rs. 300 a year.	He receives customary mamûls. At harvest time gets about 10 puttis of paddy. There are also inams in his name.
Potter ...	The major part of the day and almost throughout the year.	About Rs. 100 a year.	Do.
Carpenter ...	For the major part of the year.	About Rs. 150 a year.	No mamûls.

438 *Village trade—Purchase of commodities by the village.*—Wood for implements is got from the forests already mentioned. Iron

1 [See category 116, pp. 99-100.—Analyst]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Telugu AW17

together on the northern and north-east sides of the village. On the northern side, but apart from the village, crowded together in irregular muddy streets of obnoxious smell are the houses of the washermen (70 houses) and the toddy-drawing class (150 in number). All are thatched with palmyra leaves. It is difficult to go into the midst of these huts because of the bad smell.

There are 271 houses in the caste village according to official information, actually 350; 125 in the paracheri.

The village is rather crowded and there is no space for gardens. There is much demand for building sites. There are extensions on the north and south sides into the fields. Some houses contain even two or three families crowded together. From Rs. 2 to 3 per square yard is paid for house-sites. Some of the cultivated land is distant 5½ miles from the home of the cultivator. A hereditary disposition to hate changes, as well as party feelings, and suspicions of inequalities, prevent the ryots from exchanging to get their land continuous. Field huts are used, but mostly for the working seasons only, and are not permanent.

Subsidiary industries.—At the time of the 1891 census there were 69 weavers; in 1901, 17; in 1911, 12; now there are only three. Foreign yarn of 10, 20 and 40 Nos. is purchased from fairs held at Nidadavolu, four miles off. The cloth woven is a very rough sort, used by the very poor classes; 75 per cent of the people prefer and use foreign goods. The implements are of the ordinary country type and of primitive nature. There is no co-operation among the weavers. They are unable to face the mill competition. As they find little demand for their goods, they are frequently forced to go away as agricultural labourers, and practise weaving only as a hobby for leisure hours. A weaver with five sons, as a rule, sends four of them to agricultural work and only one to his own industry. Till 10 years back 95 per cent of the population used to wear the village cloth. Now 75 per cent prefer and use foreign clothing. Two weaving families recently went to Rajahmundry as factory coolies. Ten years ago, many women of low castes used to practise handspinning. A little cotton was grown in the village up to 1912, but latterly it was sold for higher prices than the spinners could pay.

Economic condition of the village—Rates of wages.—Labourers are employed for the day or for the year. In the latter case Rs. 25 per annum is paid to boys and Rs. 50 per annum to men. For daily labourers the wage is three to four annas to men; 1½ to 2 annas to women; 1 to 1¼ annas to children; this may be paid in grain or money, or half in money and half in grain. The only perquisites are at harvest time. Thus for each crop, the yearly labourer receives 8 or 12 seers; on the whole 1 bag nearly. In festivals, they are given only meals and nothing more.

Current prices—					Rs.	A.	P.
Paddy per bag of 166 lb.	...	...	...	...	5	8	0
Cholam	,,	...	...	...	9	1	6
Gingelly	,,	...	...	...	12	8	0
Red gram	,,	...	...	...	8	6	0
Kambu	,,	...	...	...	9	6	0
Soap nuts	,,	...	...	...	7	8	0
Ghee, per tin...	...	...	...	...	18	0	0

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ROOFING A HUT WITH PUNTEA LEAVES. Photo by Agricultural College.

[Facing p. 116]

343

343 OUTBUILDINGS--description of domestic nonresidential buildings (e.g., cookhouses, latrines, menstrual lodges, bathhouses, granaries, barns, stables); special characteristics of each; construction; etc. See also:

Stables and stalls 231
Cookhouses 232
Boathouses 504
Latrines 514
Bathhouses 515
Menstrual lodges 841

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

leads into the room used for the storing of grain and various household goods. At the end is a small room, and here are lodged the gods and deities of the household.

Although small variations are sometimes seen in the internal arrangement of this type of dwelling, the principles of construction are generally everywhere the same. The walls are made of local stone, which is available at very cheap rates; the doors and their frames are fashioned by the local carpenter and are often decorated on the outside with carvings of geometrical designs and occasionally human or animal figures. The walls are plastered with mud and washed with coloured earth. Almost all the rooms have mud floors; the roofs are always tiled. The Bhawanti type of house is the house of the well-to-do cultivator as well as that of the more substantial people belonging to the occupational castes. Although the houses of the Muslims, both cultivators and traders, as well as of Hindus with urban contacts, conform to the general pattern of the Bhawanti, they show certain marks of sophistication which are obviously the result of urban influences. Such houses have whitewashed walls and stone floors, and many, especially those of the Muslims, have pit-latrines in the backyards. The outer walls are often decorated with motifs borrowed from the city.

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It has been pointed out earlier that the average rural house of this type is often embellished with carvings on the doors. Moreover the walls are generally decorated with designs or human or other animal figures. Cheap prints of Hindu gods and goddesses or family photographs taken by street photographers in the city decorate the walls in some of the houses. The more educated people and retired petty officials sometimes possess clocks, but

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346

346 RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES--description of shrines, temples, churches, libraries, museums, schools, and other religious and educational structures; special characteristics of each; mode of construction; etc. See also:

Administration of schools and colleges 87
Administration of libraries and museums . . . 217
Administration of sacred places 778
Administration and functioning of churches . . 794

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

mention in Hindu scriptures. Being the most important river of the Deccan region its significance is very great to the Hindus of this area.

Along with the great gods of all-India Hinduism the people also continue to observe cults associated with regional and local deities and goddesses. The nature and characteristics of these goddesses differ widely in the different culture-areas of the land. Some of the goddesses listed below are commonly found in the Telugu-speaking areas, particularly in the Telangana districts of Hyderabad. Their main characteristics according to the residents of Shamirpet have also been mentioned.

They are:

1. Pochamma—goddess of smallpox.
2. Mutyalamma—goddess of chickenpox.
3. Balamma—goddess of fertility whose wrath causes sterility in women.
4. Mahakalamma—goddess of cholera.
5. Durgamma—goddess presiding over the destinies and welfare of the village.
6. Maisamma—goddess protecting the village boundaries.

Besides the above, certain other goddesses are also worshipped. Important among them are Ellamma (for the cure of boils), Pinamma (when naming a child after one of his deceased grandparents), and minor goddesses of the fields who protect the crops. To these must be added several other named and unnamed deities and goddesses whose worship is confined only to the village of Shamirpet.

All the characteristics of Hinduism having an all-India spread, described above, are in evidence in the religion of the people of Shamirpet. There is a small Shiva temple near the house of the Brahmin; another with several images on a hillock by the side of the Deshmukh's house. There are two platforms in the village on which the monkey god Hanuman[1] is lodged. In many clean caste houses there are images or pictures of some of these gods. Those

[1] Hanuman, the 'Son of the Winds', was one of the monkey helpers of Rama in his search for Sita when she was abducted by the demon Ravana (according to the epic poem *Ramayana*). Modern tradition seeks to interpret the Monkeys and Bears of this story as the aboriginal inhabitants of the Deccan at the turn of the Christian era.

who have images of deities bathe them every day and make offerings of food. They are often described as 'family' or household gods. The pictures are worshipped on the occasions of festivals. In the neighbouring village of Aliyabad there is a temple of Rama. Besides these, there are several shrines of the village goddesses. Eight of these are important. Two shrines are dedicated to Maisamma—the *Gadi Maisamma* protects the house and dependants of the village headman, and the *Katta Maisamma* lodged near the tank protects the village boundaries and presides over the agricultural prosperity of the community. Pochamma too has two shrines—one near the houses of the Vaddars and another between the living quarters of the Madigas and the Erkalas. The shrine of Dugamma near the village post office is also important. There is one shrine each for Mahakalamma, Mutyalamma, and Pinamma.

People eagerly take the opportunities of attending religious fairs, and of going to holy places for a dip in one of the sacred rivers. The major centre of pilgrimage in the Telugu-speaking parts of Hyderabad is Bhadrachalam where there is an old and impressive temple by the side of Godavari. Those who can afford to and have the inclination go to the other places of pilgrimage having country-wide recognition, such as Allahabad (Prayag) and Benares (Kashi).

3. THE RELIGIOUS YEAR

Three major types of religious ceremonies and festivals are observed in the community; family ceremonies, village ceremonies, and caste ceremonies. The Muslim section of the village population has its own family festivals and some communal ceremonies. As pointed out earlier, they participate with their Hindu neighbours in the observance of common village ritual.

HINDU FESTIVALS

Feasts and fasts form an important part of Hindu religious life. Festivals are spread evenly over the whole year. Apart from village ceremonies, agricultural ritual, and special worships organized by some castes individually, there are several festivals which may be observed by most Hindu families, irrespective of their caste

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351 GROUNDS--house plots and building lots; courtyards; walls, fences, and gates; grading; gardens and ornamental plants; swimming pools; landscape architecture; upkeep of grounds; etc. See also:

Gardening . . . . . 247 Description of fences and gates. 417

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

who practise in Secundrabad and Hyderabad, and a few even go to the well-equipped hospitals for prolonged treatment of difficult and persistent diseases. However, for the majority of the population the only medicines used for ordinary ailments are the inexpensive indigenous herbs and drugs which are locally available.

The local post office, under one of the village schoolmasters, serves Shamirpet and a large number of adjoining villages. The system of mail distribution in the countryside is very defective. Often the village postman takes a month or even more to reach a village on his periodic rounds. Letters are generally delivered personally to people who come to the post office for them, or they are handed to a co-villager who happens to visit the post office, for further transmission.

The police station at Shamirpet is in charge of a sub-inspector and has a strength of two head constables and twelve constables. This force is responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the villages under its jurisdiction. The police keep an eye on all doubtful characters, organize regular patrols of the villages and through the subordinate officials keep themselves informed of local developments. Their official records register all births and deaths, which must be reported by the inhabitants of the village.

As the tank is more than a mile from the village, the people use well water for domestic purposes. In respect of wells, Shamirpet has been very unlucky. Out of a total of thirty-three wells within the village limits, there are only three which yield good, drinkable water, the water of all other wells being brackish and unpalatable. Most people are therefore able to use sweet water only for drinking and cooking, whilst clothes and household utensils are washed in brackish water. The outlying wards of the Malas and Madigas are more fortunate in this respect, for their wells, situated at a distance of about half a mile from their respective colonies, yield 'sweet' water. In the summer months there is often an acute scarcity of drinking water in the village, and at this time large crowds of women gather at the few sweet-water wells waiting patiently to fill their many brass and earthen pots. This time of enforced waiting is spent in gossiping, in exchanging news and often in relating the latest scandals.

The sanitation of the village is the responsibility of the Yetti Madigas, whose traditional duty it is to sweep the street and lanes; in return for the service, the government grants them the use of certain rent-free lands. 27

364 certain rent-free lands. Moreover, every morning the womenfolk
351 of each house sweep and clean that portion of the lane which lies directly in front of their own house, sprinkle it with water or water mixed with cow-dung and often decorate the entrance with designs drawn with millet or rice flour. Notwithstanding this, the lanes are not always very clean. The reasons for this are many. The Yetti Madigas do not sweep the village very regularly; and the women, when they have finished their housework, often throw the refuse
[514] into the public thoroughfare. Thirdly, very few people have latrines in their houses, and even those who have them are inclined to make their children ease themselves at the side of the
[230] road. However, the pigs kept by the Erkala caste as well as the large number of dogs in the village are good scavengers and help to keep the village clean.

4. THE HOUSES

342 The dwellings in Shamirpet can be classified into three main
351 groups: the Bhawanti, the Penkutillu and the Gudse.

The Bhawanti. This is a large house with stone walls and tiled roofs; it generally stands in its own compound, which is surrounded by a wall, and invariably has five to six rooms. The following account of the house of I.R., a woman with considerable local influence and a good-sized agricultural holding, will illustrate this type of house. As we enter the gate in the compound wall we find ourselves in front of an open space which constitutes
[372] the courtyard of the house. On one side of this courtyard there is a cattle-shed, the end of which is partitioned off as a store-room for fuel-cakes made of cow-dung. Opposite the gate across the courtyard is a verandah running the whole length of the house; at one end of this verandah there is a small room in which agricultural implements are kept. The main door of the house leads into an
515 inner court which is open to the sky. In the centre is a stone-lined sink, known as *gachhu*, which can be drained and cleaned, and here, sitting on small wooden stools, the women of the house bath. The inner court is surrounded on three sides by rooms; on one side there are two inter-connected rooms, the first being used as a dining-room and the second as a kitchen. Opposite this, running the whole length of the inner court, is a long room, while opposite to the main house door and across the inner court is a door which

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

leads into the room used for the storing of grain and various household goods. At the end is a small room, and here are lodged the gods and deities of the household.

Although small variations are sometimes seen in the internal arrangement of this type of dwelling, the principles of construction are generally everywhere the same. The walls are made of local stone, which is available at very cheap rates; the doors and their frames are fashioned by the local carpenter and are often decorated on the outside with carvings of geometrical designs and occasionally human or animal figures. The walls are plastered with mud and washed with coloured earth. Almost all the rooms have mud floors; the roofs are always tiled. The Bhawanti type of house is the house of the well-to-do cultivator as well as that of the more substantial people belonging to the occupational castes. Although the houses of the Muslims, both cultivators and traders, as well as of Hindus with urban contacts, conform to the general pattern of the Bhawanti, they show certain marks of sophistication which are obviously the result of urban influences. Such houses have whitewashed walls and stone floors, and many, especially those of the Muslims, have pit-latrines in the backyards. The outer walls are often decorated with motifs borrowed from the city.

The furniture in this type of house is very meagre. In some houses there are a few hard wooden chairs, crude benches and stools or perhaps folding chairs with canvas seats. A popular item of furniture is the wooden *takht*, a large, portable wooden platform, rectangular in shape and supported on four legs. It is about two feet high and seats four to eight people. The other common article of furniture met with in the village is the bedstead, on which the meagre bedding is spread. Rich people have a large framed bedstead which is often ornamented. It is known as *palang*. But poorer people use the small-framed *charpoy* or *khat* woven with locally made thin hemp ropes.

It has been pointed out earlier that the average rural house of this type is often embellished with carvings on the doors. Moreover the walls are generally decorated with designs or human or other animal figures. Cheap prints of Hindu gods and goddesses or family photographs taken by street photographers in the city decorate the walls in some of the houses. The more educated people and retired petty officials sometimes possess clocks, but

353 these are generally out of order and are used rather as decorations than to tell the time.

415 Household utensils are generally made by the local potter. But
[556] shining brassware, including a few large pots for storing water, are a mark of respectability. Food is served on brass, bell-metal or aluminium plates. Water is drunk from metal mugs or brass beakers. In some houses a couple of china cups and saucers and a few glass plates are also to be seen.

342 *The Penkutillu*. This type of house is smaller and less ostentatious,
● 351 and is built by average cultivators with small holdings, who are neither rich nor poor according to village standards. These houses also have a courtyard and possibly a backyard; a verandah and two or three rooms which are used for various purposes. The walls are of stone, the floor of mud and the roof is tiled. The cattle-shed is generally close to the living-room and there is neither latrine nor bathroom in the house.

352 This type of house is also decorated with carvings on the doors,
353 and designs are painted on the wall. In such houses furniture is
415 regarded as a luxury; there may be a few bedsteads, some small wooden stools and possibly a crude chair or two. People with city contacts decorate the walls of their houses with commercial calendars or coloured magazine covers. The household utensils in this type of house are, except for metal plates used for serving food, of
[556] earthenware, even water being stored in clay pots. Yet respectability demands that such a house should have at least some brass utensils. These are greatly coveted by the ambitious housewife.

342 *The Gudse*. These are the commonest type of dwellings found in Telangana, and are indeed the most numerous in Shamirpet. The walls of these huts are either made of mud or they are made of wattle-screen and plastered with mud. The roof is always thatched. The hut is built in a small enclosure and has generally only one
352 room, from which the kitchen is partly partitioned. These huts have
415 very little furniture and all household utensils are the wares of the local potter. The few metal utensils which the family possesses are among the most treasured parts of the household property.

351 All the three types of village dwellings have some features in
[515] common. Almost all of them have some open space either at the front or at the back. This is generally enclosed. Here women bath and in times of emergency, such as illness or other incapacity, it may also be used as a latrine. During the rainy season

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it is used for the growing of vegetables, specially fruit-bearing creepers, and throughout the year it is used by the household fowls. Similarly, in most of these houses the cattle-shed is very close to the main living-room. Hardly half a dozen houses in the village have latrines; the majority of the people go out into the fields or behind the rocks for answering the call of nature. Notwithstanding some variety, the decorative designs found on all the houses follow a generally established pattern. The floors are swept twice every day in almost all the houses. The mud floor is periodically smeared with cow-dung mixed with water and the walls are washed annually with lime or coloured earth. Grain and provisions are stored in large receptacles made either by the potter and well burnt to a vermilion red or by the Erkala in their traditional styles of basket-work.

All the houses in Shamirpet can be classed into one of these three types. The Gudse-type huts of the Erkalas are, however, a class by themselves. These small, circular huts, made from sheets of weed-matting, are about twenty feet in diameter and are often only six feet high. The interior is unpartitioned and serves as bedroom, dining-room, living-room and kitchen. Pigs and poultry are housed in similar but smaller round huts built in the immediate vicinity of the dwelling-hut.

From time to time groups of families belonging to the nomadic castes come to the village. These have their low, portable huts, which are mostly made of folding bamboo screens. Almost every month some group belonging to this category makes its appearance in Shamirpet and after a stay of a week or so moves off with its huts, dogs and pigs.

5. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SHAMIRPET

The nearness of Shamirpet to the cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad has been mentioned. People holding small government posts or having urban relations make periodic visits to the city. Others, especially young men, cycle down to Secundrabad or Hyderabad to visit the cinema or to look at the shops.

In the broad social sense, however, Shamirpet's more intimate ties are with the villages in the neighbourhood. In the events and developments of these villages the people of Shamirpet are very keenly interested. The hamlets of Babugura and Upparpalli are